

Anderson, Bryan

From: Austin Pope <apope@wesleyan.edu>
Sent: Thursday, February 14, 2019 1:00 AM
To: LABTestimony
Subject: I stand in support of S.B. 1 and H.B. 5003

Dear Members of Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Austin Pope from Middletown and I support of S.B. 1: An Act Concerning Paid Family and Medical Leave and H.B. 5003: An Act Implementing a Paid Family and Medical Leave Program.

Passing paid family and medical leave is essential for working families in Connecticut. These families are hit hardest by the lack of paid leave, and passing this bill will no longer force people to choose between caring for family members or having to go into work. Stories of mothers being forced to return to work days after giving birth or having to go to work while family members are sick at home will be history. The lack of paid leave is both detrimental to the health of women in this state and to our economy.

Paid leave is also a step in the right direction for racial justice and gender equality. Women will be able to return to the workforce much more easily and will face less discrimination in hiring just because of their gender. This bill will also support women of color, who, in many cases, are the heads of household and unable to miss work to care for their families. Through paid leave, Black and Hispanic women, who are overrepresented in low wage jobs, will have the opportunity to recover, heal, and take time with their families without risking their financial wellbeing. I want to live in a Connecticut where one's family comes before one's job.

While paid family leave will not solve all of the economic and racial inequalities in this country, this bill will have a measurable impact on both issues and a positive step for the working families of Connecticut.

I strongly support S.B. 1 and call on the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers to vote to make paid family and medical leave a reality for all Connecticut workers.

Thank you for your time,
Austin Pope